

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 033961
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 H-02
SSM-05 SIG-02 SS-15 SP-02 PM-05 INR-10 NSAE-00
L-03 ACDA-12 SSO-00 INRE-00 /105 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS -MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. NEUMANN
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----088551 090225Z /64

O 090052Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 033961

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA
NSC

UNCLAS STATE 033961

CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 8, 1978

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 8. FYI ONLY, OFFICER PRESENT TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER. SEPTTEL CARRIES EXCERPTS OF BRIEFING RELATING TO HORN OF AFRICA. Q. REPORTS ARE COMING OUT OF BEIRUT OF INTENSE FIGHTING; UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 033961

AND I WONDERED IF YOU HAD ANYTHING INDEPENDENT YOU COULD SAY ABOUT THE LEVEL OF FIGHTING AND WHO'S INVOLVED.

A. BETWEEN THE LEBANESE AND SYRIANS?

Q. WELL, THE REPORTS WE HAD ARE THE LEBANESE ARMY AND THE SYRIANS AND THE THIRD PARTY, BEING THE PALESTINIANS, NOT BEING INVOLVED RIGHT NOW.

A. NO, I LITERALLY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING OF ANY SUBSTANCE BEYOND THE PRESS REPORTS THEMSELVES. IT IS APPARENTLY A CONFUSED SITUATION. THERE ARE ALSO APPARENTLY EFFORTS BEING MADE ON A CONTINUING BASIS TO STOP THE CONFLICT; AND BEYOND THAT I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING.

Q. WHO'S MAKING THE EFFORT -- THE AMERICANS?

A. THEY ARE. THE PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES, BOTH LEBANESE AND SYRIANS.

Q. IS THE AMERICAN EMBASSY INVOLVED IN THOSE NEGOTIATIONS OR ARE THERE EFFORTS BEING MADE TO STOP THE FIGHTING?

A. I'M NOT AWARE OF SUCH A ROLE AT THIS TIME.

Q. THE USUAL BUSINESS ABOUT AMERICAN PROPERTY, AMERICANS-- ANY REPORTS OF ANYTHING ON THAT?

A. NO -- LITERALLY. IF WE DEVELOP MORE INFORMATION, I WILL PUT IT OUT LATER THIS AFTERNOON. BUT WHAT I'M TELLING YOU NOW IS THAT I HAVE NO REPORTS IN ANY CHANNEL OF AMERICANS OR AMERICAN PROPERTY IN TROUBLE.

Q. WHEN YOU SAY THAT THE AMERICANS AND THE SYRIANS SEEM TO BE MAKING AN EFFORT TO STOP THE FIGHTING, ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT, YOU KNOW, YOU SEE SOME LIMITS AND YOU UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 033961

CAN SEE AN END TO IT?

A. THE FIRST REPORTS WE'VE SEEN WERE THAT IT'S FAIRLY CONFINED IN AREA AND SCOPE. BUT, AGAIN, I WANT TO REPEAT THAT WE ARE GETTING A PICTURE WHICH IS FAIRLY CONFUSED AS TO THE EXACT STATE OF PLAY; AND, TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, WE'RE RELYING AS MUCH ON WHAT YOU ARE REPORTING OR OTHERS ARE REPORTING AS WE ARE ON ANY INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT.

Q. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME REPORTS OF AN INCREASING NUMBER OF MILITARY PRESENCE -- SYRIAN MILITARY PRESENCE -- IN LEBANON. CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT?

A. NO. I CANNOT.

Q. CAN YOU SAY ANY MORE ON THE SITUATION REGARDING ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO? AND, IN PARTICULAR, DOES THE ADMINISTRATION WANT TO REVISE ITS ARMS AGREEMENT WITH MOROCCO TO ALLOW MOROCCANS TO USE AMERICAN EQUIPMENT IN THE SAHARA?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NEW FOR YOU ON THE FIRST PART OF YOUR QUESTION. I WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO TAKE THE SECOND PART OF THE QUESTION.

Q. DO YOU HAVE A DATE FOR MR. ATHERTON'S RETURN TO THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. THE LAST I HAD WAS TEN DAYS TO TWO WEEKS.

Q. IS HE GOING TOMORROW TO NEW YORK?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 033961

A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT HE IS.

Q. TO MEET WITH DAYAN?

A. YES.

Q. WILL THE SECRETARY MEET WITH DAYAN WHILE HE IS IN NEW YORK THIS WEEKEND?

A. NO. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, HE WON'T.

Q. COULD WE CLEAR UP THE SECRETARY'S NEW YORK SCHEDULE A LITTLE BETTER? IS IT STILL A ONE-SUBJECT TRIP, NAMIBIA?

A. YES, IT IS STILL A ONE-SUBJECT TRIP. I WILL ONLY ADD PARENTHETICALLY, BECAUSE IT'S OBVIOUS THAT IF THAT MANY FOREIGN MINISTERS ARE GATHERED IN ONE PLACE, THE POSSIBILITY OF BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING OUR RELATIONSHIPS MAY ARISE. THERE IS NO TELLING HOW LONG THE NAMIBIA TALKS WILL GO ON IN THAT TWO-DAY PERIOD.

Q. I UNDERSTAND IT MAKES GOOD SENSE, BUT SO FAR AS MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY OR SOME OTHER SUBJECT, IT'S NOT FORESEEN?

A. THERE IS NOTHING ELSE SCHEDULED AS A MATTER OF DIRECT SPECIFICITY THAT I KNOW ABOUT. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, WHILE THE POSSIBILITY OF BILATERALS DOES ARISE -- AND I'M NOT EVEN SURE THAT ANY OF THOSE ARE SCHEDULED YET BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW THE SCHEDULE WELL ENOUGH TO DO IT, BUT THEY MAY HAVE -- I DO NOT KNOW OF ANY OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH ARE BRINGING HIM TO NEW YORK.

Q. THERE HAS BEEN A REPORT THAT MR. SADAT WANTED TO SPEND CONSIDERABLE TIME IN NEW YORK, BUT THE ADMINISTRATION UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 033961

SUGGESTED HE NOT DO THAT, BUT THAT I SUPPOSE HE JUST GO OFF TO EUROPE. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?

A. YES. THAT'S NOT TRUE. THERE WAS NO DISCOURAGEMENT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT WITH ANY OF HIS PLANS. WE TRIED TO FACILITATE WHAT PLANS HE HAD. BUT INsofar AS DISCOURAGING HIM OR TURNING HIM AWAY FROM SCHEDULES THAT HE HAD, THE ANSWER IS NO, WE DIDN'T.

Q. WAS HIS SCHEDULE WORKED OUT MUTUALLY IN A WAY DIFFERENT FROM HIS ORIGINAL SCHEDULE? DID HE HAVE MORE ELABORATE PLANS AND THEN IN THE END, JUST WASHINGTON?

A. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT CONSIDERATIONS, BUT THE ONE CONSIDERATION I CAN TELL YOU, FOR SURE, IS THAT WE DID NOT IN ANY WAY ATTEMPT TO RESTRICT HIS ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

Q. BY "MUTUALLY," I MEANT DID THE TWO OF YOU GET TOGETHER AND DECIDE IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA IF HE DIDN'T GO HERE OR THERE OR DID GO HERE OR THERE?

A. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT KIND OF DISCUSSION.

Q. I'D LIKE TO ASK A QUESTION ON THE STATEMENT OF CHRONOLOGY YESTERDAY. IF I UNDERSTAND IT RIGHT, SOMETIME AGO, YOU ANNOUNCED, OR ONE OF YOUR COLLEAGUES, THAT YOU HAVE HAD A REPLY FROM ISRAEL ON THIS SHILOH SETTLEMENT?

A. YES.

Q. WERE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE ANSWER THAT IT WAS NOT A CIVILIAN SETTLEMENT AND A PERMANENT ONE?
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 033961

A. WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 31 ABOUT THE ISRAELI POSITION ON SHILOH DESCRIBES THE RESPONSE GENERALLY, THAT HE RECEIVED THROUGHT OUR AMBASSADOR ON THAT DAY.

Q. NOW IN THIS STATEMENT ON ITEM 5, YOU QUOTE SETTLERS FROM GUSH EMUNIM, SAYING THAT THIS IS A PERMANENT CIVILIAN SETTLEMENT. NOW WHY DIDN'T YOU COMPLETE THE PICTURE AND GIVE IT ON THE RECORD, THE ISRAELI REPLY THAT HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND SATISFIED.

A. BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT IN FACT SPOKE TO THAT.

Q. BUT YOU WENT OUT OF YOUR WAY TO REPORT OTHER FACTS AND THIS STATEMENT, WHOEVER READS IT WOULD BE LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS A PERMANENT CIVILIAN SETTLEMENT SINCE THERE IS NO REPLY FROM ISRAEL.

Q. WELL FRANKLY, THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON IT, I THOUGHT, WOULD SPEAK FOR ITSELF. THIS CHRONOLOGY HAD TO DO WITH EXCHANGES WHICH MIGHT NOT SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

Q. BUT YOU DID HAVE SOME SORT OF A REPLY FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT?

A. YES, WE DID.

Q. TO WHICH YOU REFERRED -- YOU REFERRED TO OTHER REPLIES, HERE IN THIS CHRONOLOGY.

A. I'LL BE HONEST WITH YOU. I DO NOT KNOW WHY IT WAS CUT OFF AT "X" POINT -- EXCEPT BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT INDICATED IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A REPLY, AND THE ASSURANCE THAT THAT WAS NOT A CIVILIAN SETTLEMENT.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 033961

Q. YOU SAID YESTERDAY YOU WOULD GO AS FAR BACK AS JERUSALEM.

A. YES, THAT'S VERY CORRECT. I CERTAINLY DID SAY THAT. BUT FRANKLY, THE REPLY THAT THE WHITE HOUSE, OR SOMEBODY, HAS GIVEN ON THIS IS THE CORRECT ONE. THE DECISION WAS THAT WHAT HAD ARISEN WERE ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN JANUARY, SPECIFALLY, AN EARLY JANUARY SETTLEMENT, AND THE REPLY SHOULD CONFINE ITSELF TO THAT. FURTHERMORE, BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT HAD SPOKEN IN AT LEAST ONE, I THINK TWO, PRESS CONFERENCES ON THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF SETTLEMENTS AND THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, IT WAS NOT FELT NECESSARY TO GO BACK INTO ANY OTHER PERIOD.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU THINK THERE WAS NO CONTROVERSY OVER THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE WAS OR THERE WASN'T AN ISRAELI COMMITMENT?

A. OH, I THINK FROM READING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ONE THING AND ANOTHER, THERE PROBABLY IS CONTROVERSY OVER IT. I THINK IT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED A GREAT DEAL.

Q. SO IF YOU CLEAR UP ONE CONFUSION, WHY DON'T YOU CLEAR UP THE WHOLE CONFUSION?

A. FRANKLY, BECAUSE EVERYONE, I BELIEVE, HAS FAIRLY WELL STATED THEIR POSITION ON IT.

Q. HAVE YOU BEEN INFORMED OF ANY FURTHER ISRAELI PLANS TO SETTLE OR TO AUTHORIZE SETTLEMENTS IN THE WEST BANK, OR IN SINAI?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 09 STATE 033961

A. I DON'T HAVE ANY OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF ANY PLANS.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMAL INDICATIONS THAT THEY ARE GOING TO CONTINUE WITH SPECIFIC NEW SETTLEMENTS?

A. LET ME TAKE THAT QUESTION?

2. FOLLOWING IS ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN AT NOON BRIEFING FEBRUARY 7 AND POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT:

Q. IS IT THE US GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO INFORM PRESIDENT SADAT ON A DECISION ON ARMS FOR EGYPT BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE?

A. OUR CURRENT REVIEW OF PENDING ARMS SALES IS CONTINUING
AND WE CANNOT NOW SAY WHEN THIS REVIEW WILL BE COMPLETED.

VANCE

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION, PRESS SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE033961
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:WBHARRIS:DP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780060-0179
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197802120/baaafbue.tel
Line Count: 332
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1b9cb5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3475196
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 8, 1978
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1b9cb5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014